

Dear members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Nick Keough (they/he) and I am a junior at the University of Oregon as well as a member of the Associated Students of the University of Oregon!

Today, I am asking you to vote yes on HB 2919, the Textbook On Time Adoption Bill, which will allow there to be transparency for students on the costs of textbooks before registering for classes.

This bill would allow students to better plan for paying for higher education, which is already a difficult feat with the skyrocketing cost of tuition and mandatory fees! Additionally, the skyrocketing expense of textbooks plays into a student's ability to succeed by creating environments where students must think about the costs of textbooks, and fees related to courses instead of content and courses themselves, leaving students more vulnerable to falling behind in classes and a less secure path to graduation.

Especially with COVID-19 and the ongoing financial crisis, this bill would allow students to have more transparency and security when planning to pay for college, and this would incentivize professors to use lower cost or free textbooks because the materials are visible to all students before registering for a course. Furthermore, this bill will also move policy towards adopting more Open Education Resources (OER) on campus, such as free online textbooks, which ultimately make college in Oregon more accessible.

That is why this bill is so important to me. On my campus, I have seen students have to choose between a textbook and a meal, between textbook and housing, between a textbook and healthcare, etc. Furthermore, I have seen students skip buying a textbook or buying a later edition of the book because they could not afford the required textbook. Had they known at the time of registration; they may have selected another course instead that was more aligned with their financial situation at the time. As a first-generation, low-income, non-traditional student, the cost of attendance at the University of Oregon has been the biggest barrier to my success as a student. My family and I have made so many sacrifices for me to continue to be in college, and I wish it could just be easier for students like me to afford going here.

Please vote yes on HB 2919, and thank you for your time.

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Nick Keough (They/He)